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THE WASHINGTON POST
24 April 1978

CIA, Chicago Police Links Are Detailed

By Larry Green
Los Angeles Times

CHICAGO—Details of a mutual, once-secret and possibly illegal relationship between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Chicago Police Department during the late 1960s have begun to surface here.

Internal CIA memos, now part of a court file, show that former agency director Richard Helms approved a plan to send experts in spying to evaluate the police department's intelligence-gathering machinery and to assist in improving the local spy operation.

While the memos, disclosed in a lawsuit, do not make clear the total assistance the police department received, or if similar assistance was given to other American law enforcement agencies, one document contains a proposal to train Chicago police officers at CIA facilities and at CIA expense.

The documents indicate the CIA's assistance was primarily intended to help the police deal with civil unrest. But previously disclosed Chicago police documents show the local spy effort was eventually directed toward individuals and groups engaged in controversial political activity but never investigated for criminal activity.

Court records show that the Chicago Police Department's intelligence unit compiled dossiers on almost 200,000 individual and groups both before and after receiving CIA assistance. Included were files on prominent lawyers, businessmen, politicians, clergy and scholars. There were also dossiers on church groups, neighborhood organizations and citizens concerned about such diverse issues as pollution and police brutality.

Although there is nothing in the court documents to indicate the Chicago Police Department reciprocated for the CIA's assistance, informed sources said much of the raw data gathered on individuals and groups was forwarded to the CIA for incorporation into its files.

A presidential commission headed by Nelson A. Rockefeller and a U.S. Senate committee headed by Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), which investigated CIA activities in 1975 and 1976 reported the relationship between the agency and the Chicago Police Department. However, the documents now being turned over in U.S. District Court in Chicago are believed to be the first made public indicating the full extent of that relationship.

The documents are being given to lawyers representing the Alliance to End Repression, a group created to monitor and issue public reports on police performance. The group was financed, in part, by the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

The alliance filed one of three complex class-action suits now in federal court here charging the Chicago Police Department, the FBI, the Army and the CIA with illegally spying on both itself and other Chicago-area residents and groups. The litigation charges the agency spied on persons who were exercising their First Amendment rights and who were taking part in political activity and are protected by the Constitution.

Richard Gutman, a lawyer for the alliance, said the CIA documents indicate the agency, by assisting the Chicago Police Department, was "illegally involved in domestic affairs."

"I don't think that the CIA helped the Chicago police Red Squad [as the intelligence division is known] for purely altruistic reasons," Gutman added. "I think the CIA was attempting to develop the Chicago Red Squad as a source of information for the CIA's own domestic spy program, Operation Chaos, which began in August 1967."

Both the Chicago Police Department and the CIA declined to comment on the documents because they are involved in litigation.

CIA memos indicate the relation-

ship with the Chicago Police Department began in late 1967, after the former Chicago police superintendent, James B. Conlisk Jr., along with several police officials from other cities, were Helms' guests at CIA headquarters.

In October 1967, Conlisk wrote Helms saying he wanted "to avail this department of the opportunity of an evaluation of our procedures and advice and counsel in the areas which you [Helms] suggested."

Conlisk indicated he was anxious for the project to begin because he expected Chicago to "experience a substantial measure of activity in sensitive areas" as a result of the announcement that the 1968 Democratic National Convention would be held in the city. Other memos show that a two-man team, operating as representatives of another government agency and apparently not using their own names, was sent to Chicago in November 1967.

Among the recommendations generated by that team were proposals for improving the gathering and evaluating of intelligence during the early stages of a potential civil disturbance and for improving the method in which files are kept on "subversive groups and organized crime."